

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 STATE 121653
ORIGIN AF-10

INFO OCT-01 NEA-11 ISO-00 INR-10 EUR-12 ARA-10 PM-05
NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00 NSAE-00 DODE-00 /081 R

DRAFTED BY INR/PMT:DMURPHY/AF/E:KPGARLAND
APPROVED BY AF: W C HARROP
AF/E: R POST
NEA/IRN: M GREEN
EUR/SOV: R PERITO
ARA/CCA: A D BOWEN
INR: M PACKMAN
INR/RAF: C T THORNE

-----085697 121929Z /64

R 121809Z MAY 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
INFO AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
AMEMBASSY DJIBOUTI
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

S E C R E T STATE 121653

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PDEV, MILI, ET, CU

SUBJECT: CUBANS AND SOVIETS IN ERITREA

REF: TEHRAN 3531

1. IN DISCUSSING ERITREA WITH MFA OFFICIALS, PER REFTEL,
YOU MAY DRAW ON THE FOLLOWING ANALYSIS:

THERE ARE A NUMBER OF INDICATIONS WHICH SUGGEST THAT THE
ETHIOPIAN ARMY MAY SHORTLY LAUNCH A MAJOR OFFENSIVE IN
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 STATE 121653

ERITREA. WE BELIEVE THAT THE MAJOR OBJECTIVES OF SUCH
AN OFFENSIVE WOULD BE TO OPEN MAJOR ROADS AND LIFT THE
INSURGENT SIEGES OF MAJOR TOWNS BEFORE THE THREE-MONTH
RAINY SEASON BEGINS IN MID-JUNE.

2. CUBAN INTENTIONS REMAIN UNCLEAR. MOST OF THE AVAILABLE
INFORMATION SUGGESTS THAT THE CUBANS ARE RELUCTANT TO BE-

COME INVOLVED IN THE KIND OF DIRECT COMBAT ROLE THAT THEY PLAYED IN ERITREA. INSTEAD, THEY APPEAR TO BE TRYING TO PROMOTE SOME KIND OF NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT, ALTHOUGH THEIR PROSPECTS FOR SUCCESS IN SUCH AN ENDEAVOR ARE DIM, IN PART BECAUSE MENGISTU SEEMS DETERMINED TO ACHIEVE A MILITARY SOLUTION. IF ETHIOPIAN MILITARY EFFORTS FOUNDER, WE THINK THERE IS A GOOD CHANCE THAT THE CUBANS WOULD EVENTUALLY

SEND TROOPS TO RECOUP THE SITUATION, ALTHOUGH SUCH A MOVE MIGHT NOT OCCUR UNTIL AFTER THE RAINY SEASON.

3. WE EXPECT, HOWEVER, THAT CUBAN ADVISERS WILL ASSIST IN OPERATIONAL AND LOGISTICAL PLANNING FOR THE UPCOMING OFFENSIVE AND THAT CUBAN ADVISERS WOULD ACCOMPANY ETHIOPIAN UNITS INTO COMBAT. ALTHOUGH OUR INFORMATION IS SKETCHY AND OFTEN CONTRADICTORY, THERE COULD BE AS MANY AS 1,200 TO 1,500 CUBAN ADVISERS IN ERITREA PROPER (THE LARGEST SINGLE NUMBER MAY BE IN THE AREA AROUND THE PORT OF ASSAB, WHICH IS NOT THE SCENE OF MAJOR INSURGENCY BUT IS THE PORT OF ENTRY FOR SOVIET MILITARY SHIPMENTS). WE ALSO BELIEVE THERE MAY BE ADDITIONAL CUBAN ADVISERS WITH ETHIOPIAN MILITARY FORCES IN PROVINCES BORDERING ERITREA. WE HAVE NO HARD EVIDENCE TO DATE THAT CUBAN COMBAT UNITS HAVE MOVED FROM THE OGADEN TO NORTHERN ETHIOPIA OR ERITREA.

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 STATE 121653

4. ALTHOUGH THE SOVIETS WOULD MUCH PREFER A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT IN ERITREA, THEY ARE CONTINUING TO PROVIDE ALL NECESSARY SUPPORT FOR AN ETHIOPIAN MILITARY CAMPAIGN. WE BELIEVE THAT SOVIET ADVISORS WILL PLAY A MAJOR IF NOT CONTROLLING ROLE IN THE PLANNING AND DIRECTION OF ETHIOPIAN MILITARY OPERATIONS. MEANWHILE, THE SOVIET SEALIFT AND AIRLIFT OF MILITARY EQUIPMENT IS EXPECTED TO CONTINUE AT A RATE ADEQUATE TO MEET ALL REQUIREMENTS GENERATED BY AN ETHIOPIAN OFFENSIVE IN ERITREA. VANCE

SECRET

NNN

SECRET

PAGE 01 STATE 121653
ORIGIN ARA-04

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /005 R

66011

DRAFTED BY:ARA/CCA:WSSMIH:YT

APPROVED BY:ARA/CCA:WSSMIT

-----130809 171524Z /53

R 170645Z MAY 78

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USINT HAVANA

S E C R E T STATE 121653

FOLLOWING REPEAT STATE 121653 SENT ACTION TEHRAN INFO MOGADISCIO

ADDIS ABABA DJIBOUTI KHARTOUM MAY 12.

QUOTE S E C R E T STATE 121653

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PDEV, MILI, ET, CU

SUBJECT: CUBANS AND SOVIETS IN ERITREA

REF: TEHRAN 3531

1. IN DISCUSSING ERITREA WITH MFA OFFICIALS, PER REFTEL,
YOU MAY DRAW ON THE FOLLOWING ANALYSIS:

THERE ARE A NUMBER OF INDICATIONS WHICH SUGGEST THAT THE
ETHIOPIAN ARMY MAY SHORTLY LAUNCH A MAJOR OFFENSIVE IN
ERITREA. WE BELIEVE THAT THE MAJOR OBJECTIVES OF SUCH
AN OFFENSIVE WOULD BE TO OPEN MAJOR ROADS AND LIFT THE
INSURGENT SIEGES OF MAJOR TOWNS BEFORE THE THREE-MONTH
RAINY SEASON BEGINS IN MID-JUNE.

2. CUBAN INTENTIONS REMAIN UNCLEAR. MOST OF THE AVAILABLE
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 STATE 121653

INFORMATION SUGGESTS THAT THE CUBANS ARE RELUCTANT TO BE-
COME INVOLVED IN THE KIND OF DIRECT COMBAT ROLE THAT THEY
PLAYED IN ERITREA. INSTEAD, THEY APPEAR TO BE TRYING TO
PROMOTE SOME KIND OF NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT, ALTHOUGH THEIR
PROSPECTS FOR SUCCESS IN SUCH AN ENDEAVOR ARE DIM, IN PART
BECAUSE MENGISTU SEEMS DETERMINED TO ACHIEVE A MILITARY
SOLUTION. IF ETHIOPIAN MILITARY EFFORTS FOUNDER, WE THINK
THERE IS A GOOD CHANCE THAT THE CUBANS WOULD EVENTUALLY

SEND TROOPS TO RECOUP THE SITUATION, ALTHOUGH SUCH A MOVE
MIGHT NOT OCCUR UNTIL AFTER THE RAINY SEASON.

3. WE EXPECT, HOWEVER, THAT CUBAN ADVISERS WILL ASSIST IN OPERATIONAL AND LOGISTICAL PLANNING FOR THE UPCOMING OFFENSIVE AND THAT CUBAN ADVISERS WOULD ACCOMPANY ETHIOPIAN UNITS INTO COMBAT. ALTHOUGH OUR INFORMATION IS SKETCHY AND OFTEN CONTRADICTORY, THERE COULD BE AS MANY AS 1,200 TO 1,500 CUBAN ADVISERS IN ERITREA PROPER (THE LARGEST SINGLE NUMBER MAY BE IN THE AREA AROUND THE PORT OF ASSAB, WHICH IS NOT THE SCENE OF MAJOR INSURGENCY BUT IS THE PORT OF ENTRY FOR SOVIET MILITARY SHIPMENTS). WE ALSO BELIEVE THERE MAY BE ADDITIONAL CUBAN ADVISERS WITH ETHIOPIAN MILITARY FORCES IN PROVINCES BORDERING ERITREA. WE HAVE NO HARD EVIDENCE TO DATE THAT CUBAN COMBAT UNITS HAVE MOVED FROM THE OGADEN TO NORTHERN ETHIOPIA OR ERITREA.

4. ALTHOUGH THE SOVIETS WOULD MUCH PREFER A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT IN ERITREA, THEY ARE CONTINUING TO PROVIDE ALL NECESSARY SUPPORT FOR AN ETHIOPIAN MILITARY CAMPAIGN. WE BELIEVE THAT SOVIET ADVISORS WILL PLAY A MAJOR IF NOT CONTROLLING ROLE IN THE PLANNING AND DIRECTION OF

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 STATE 121653

ETHIOPIAN MILITARY OPERATIONS. MEANWHILE, THE SOVIET SEALIFT AND AIRLIFT OF MILITARY EQUIPMENT ARE EXPECTED TO CONTINUE AT A RATE ADEQUATE TO MEET ALL REQUIREMENTS GENERATED BY AN ETHIOPIAN OFFENSIVE IN ERITREA. VACE JNCE

SECRET

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: COUNTERINSURGENCY, ARMED FORCES, REPORTS, INTELLIGENCE ASSESSMENTS, MILITARY PLANS, INVASIONS, ERITREA
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 12 may 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978STATE121653
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: DMURPHY/AF/E:KPGARLAND
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780202-1080
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780563/aaaacbk1.tel
Line Count: 202
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: ee2e969f-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN AF
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 TEHRAN 3551, 78 TEHRAN 3531
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags: ANOMALY
Review Date: 22 mar 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2704305
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CUBANS AND SOVIETS IN ERITREA
TAGS: PDEV, MILI, MOPS, ET, CU, ELF
To: TEHRAN MOGADISCIO MULTIPLE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/ee2e969f-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014